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Letter dated 20 November 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Government of the Sudan wishes to make the following comments on the statement made on 9 November 2001 to the Security Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uganda concerning the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Ugandan Minister alleged in his statement to the Council that the objective of the remaining Ugandan forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was to ensure that the forces of the Democratic Alliance, that are supported by the Sudan and trained by al-Qa`idah, did not obtain assistance for the purpose of launching terrorist operations in Uganda across the Ruwenzori Mountains.

Once again, these Ugandan allegations are intended to divert attention from the accusations directed at the Ugandan regime concerning its scandalous invasion of the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the plundering of its resources by officials of the Ugandan Government, as attested by the report of the United Nations Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo contained in document S/2001/357 of 12 April 2001. That report revealed to the international community that the purpose of the interference by Uganda in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically in areas where gold and diamond mines were located, was to attain economic and financial objectives and that the political and security reasons were no more than a pretext and a cover for the systematic and large-scale plundering of the wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the benefit of the corrupt regime in Uganda. The new Panel of Experts, in paragraph 100 of its report, contained in document S/2001/1072 dated 13 November 2001, stated that influential Government officials, military officers and businessmen in Uganda continued to exploit the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their commercial interests.

What is new this time in the allegations of the Ugandan regime is its desperate attempt, by means of a cheap, opportunistic and shameful exploitation of the issue of terrorism, to link the terrorist organization al-Qa`idah with the forces of the Democratic Alliance, which are opposed to the Ugandan regime, and the claim that the Sudan supports the forces of the Democratic Alliance. We need only refer here to what was said by an official of Human Rights Watch commenting on allegations by Uganda that there was a connection between the terrorist organization al-Qa`idah and the Ugandan forces of the Democratic Alliance which opposes the Ugandan regime, who stated to the Reuters news agency on 6 November 2001, that "This is pure opportunism of the worst kind". He went on to say that the Ugandan regime was trying to seize the moment when the United States of America was building a

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coalition against terrorism to attract attention and attempt to gain something from the United States: "They are trying to use the momentum of the United States building its coalition on terror to gain attention and favours from the United States".

The hostility of the Ugandan regime towards the Sudan is common knowledge; it continues to harbour the terrorist rebel movement in Southern Sudan and to provide it with military and logistic facilities for its acts of terrorism. In December 2000 this induced the Ugandan Parliament to adopt the report of the Foreign and Legal Affairs Committee which requested the Ugandan Government to stop supporting the rebel movement in Southern Sudan because it was prejudicial to stability and security in the region and had caused severe human suffering among the civilian population.

The hostility of Uganda towards the Sudan and its wanton interference in the Sudan's internal affairs has reached a serious stage, as was revealed by the Ugandan newspaper *The Monitor* in its issue of 13 November 2001 which referred to the request by the President of the Ugandan regime to President George Bush, during his meeting with him on the occasion of the current session of the General Assembly, to partition the Sudan into two States.

The Ugandan regime should concentrate first of all on ensuring human rights and freedoms for its own citizens in Uganda before calling on others to do so. For example, the Acholi people in Northern Uganda are suffering from the war of oppression and extermination waged by the ruling minority in Kampala. This was confirmed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-seventh session in Geneva on 10 April 2001 when he called on the Ugandan Government to cease its campaigns against the Acholi people. That was the very reason that impelled the extremist Christian organization the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to rebel against these injustices.

It has become clear from the hostile practices of the Ugandan regime in the region that it has become a source of instability in the Great Lakes region as exemplified by the military confrontations in which the regime has become involved with more than one neighbouring country. Many States in the region are facing serious security threats originating in Ugandan territory such as Ugandan support for terrorists, outlaws and mercenaries. The time has come for the international community to compel the Ugandan regime to desist from its threats to regional security and peace, its ongoing violations of the international laws and customs which govern relations between States, its wanton interference in the internal affairs of the States of the region, its continuing plunder of the resources of the people of the Congo who have suffered grievously at the hands of the Ugandan regime, and the occupation, plundering and despoliation of resources. After all that, the Ugandan regime makes naive attempts at cheap blackmail of the international community on unacceptable pretexts.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Elfatih **Erwa**
Permanent Representative